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The reader who pays particularly close attention to the important distinctions raised in the introduction will reap the major rewards of comprehension that are available in the next two sections.

The second section deals firstly with the important concepts of physical space, position, and theatre geography. Although the focus of the work is on naval activities close to shore, the lessons drawn from the discussion and examples presented are relevant everywhere in this modern era of long-range sensors, aircraft and weaponry, which have the effect of "shrinking" oceanic distances and expanding the littoral zone. Having set a firm conceptual foundation, the author then moves on to discuss fleet distribution, the equally- often misused concepts of sea control and sea denial, and the naval methods employed in either securing or denying control of both ocean areas and narrow seas. The chapter on "methods" contains another especially important section that distinguishes between naval tactical actions, engagements, battles, and major naval operations (129 – 137). The differences between tactical "attacks," simple actions by few or single platforms against minor objectives, versus "strikes," more complex activities by multiple platforms sometimes against operational objectives, are explained clearly, illustrating that the term "strike" is misused, even in professional naval circles, on a daily basis.

The final section, on the functional roles of naval power, is as masterful and insightful as the other two parts. The chapter on naval support to the army should be compulsory reading for any officers involved in the current transformational studies underway among the power elite groups of the Canadian military. Far from emphasizing the extreme case of amphibious assault against defended beachheads, Vego asserts that the traditional naval support roles in expeditionary warfare most commonly involve cover, support, and supply, all of which Vego shows to have been vitally important in a multitude of times and places (269).

The only deficiency of this fine work is that it lacks a glossary, which may have

presented a prohibitive undertaking considering the number of important concepts contained in this compact volume. Readers will undoubtedly find themselves flagging many sections for review and making side-lists of especially important definitions for handy reference. The index is detailed, which will be a very helpful aid to students.

In his concluding chapter, Vego makes some astute recommendations about the composition of fleet forces intended for employment in narrow seas. Having built such an impressive foundation of evidence about the importance of naval operations in the joint context, his opinions on the size, capabilities, and configuration of inshore warships and their support vessels carry a great weight of credibility. Anyone wishing to educate themselves about the demands of naval operations in an expeditionary joint context would do very well to begin with this outstanding and authoritative work by a master of the subject. This title is highly recommended as essential reading for advanced students of naval theory and for those wishing to elevate their level of understanding of the subject.

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Felipe Vieira de Castro. *The Pepper Wreck. A Portuguese Indiaman at the Mouth of the Tagus River*. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, [www.tamu.edu/upress](http://www.tamu.edu/upress), 2005. xi + 287 pp., illustrations, maps, appendices, artifact list, notes, bibliography, index, US\$60, cloth; ISBN 1-58544-390-5.

In September 1606, the Portuguese East Indiaman, *Nossa Senhora dos Mártires*, successfully had completed the long journey from Cochin, India to Portugal. Within sight of Lisbon, her captains decided to escape a southerly gale by entering the Tagus River. This fateful decision resulted in the ship grounding on a submerged rock and breaking up, the loss of most of her valuable cargo of pepper along

with the lives of more than two hundred persons. The black tide of peppercorns energized local residents and royal officials salvaged what they could. The wreck finally ceased to attract attention and the author suggests that the great earthquake of 1755 that destroyed much of Lisbon generated a tsunami that probably rolled heavy rocks over its remains. A codfish trawler sank at the same location in 1966, adding debris to the site. Sport divers looted the site in the 1980s.

Felipe Castro has combined the elements of a tragic tale of shipwreck and financial loss with the subsequent story of the ship at the bottom of the Tagus River near the fortress of São Julião da Barra. Records indicate that salvage efforts resulted in the recovery of some of the ship's guns and other items. A 1994 expedition recovered a bronze gun that was raised, illegally, by preservation-conscious sport divers. In 1993, the Portuguese government established a law that legalized treasure hunting. Although controversial, it was in effect for two years and finally repealed in 1997. At Expo '98 in Lisbon, the São Julião da Barra shipwreck project was the prime example of the Portuguese government's new position on the protection of underwater cultural heritage.

Obviously, the *Nossa Senhora dos Mártires* lived at least two lives, first as a Portuguese Indiaman hauling pepper, ceramics and other goods from Asia, and then as the shipwreck that helped galvanize public support for the preservation of Portugal's submerged cultural resources. Castro carefully weaves together the disparate threads of the story. Following the introduction is a chapter on Portugal and the India route in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The most prized cargo was peppercorn, carried in sealed wooden boxes. Other spices included ginger, cinnamon, clove and mace, the latter valued as a cure for sexual impotence. India route *naus* were great ships reaching 900 tons. Estimates by various scholars suggest that as many as two hundred India route ships were wrecked between about 1500 and 1650, but only a few vessels have been found, and almost all were heavily looted.

The author turns to the study of the

ships in chapter three. He begins with a review of the primary sources on ship construction from Italian, French, English, Spanish and Portuguese documents. Key texts include the Venetian manuscripts, the *Fabrica di galere* (also known as the *Libro di marineria*), containing the writings of professional shipbuilders, and the Timbotta manuscript (also referred to as the "Trombetta" manuscript, 37, 39), written by a cultured Renaissance man who collected the work of experts. This very useful discussion of the textual evidence includes a reference to the long-lost Michael of Rhodes manuscript, written in 1434 and is the earliest treatise on shipbuilding. The is recently rediscovered Rhodes manuscript will be published by the Dibner Institute for the History of Science and Technology at MIT.

Students of ship construction will appreciate not only the examination of textual evidence, but Castro's outline of the construction sequence in building an India nau (47-58). Following this, he proceeds to the logical next step with a chapter on the voyage of the *Nossa Senhora dos Mártires*. Readers learn how the ship worked, the poor sanitation, the crowded conditions, the routine of shipboard life. Meals for the common sailor consisted of hardtack in wine or water, salted meat, beans, rice or lentils. The upper classes and Jesuit priests had expensive culinary tastes. Records mention pork, ham, sausages, jams, and sometimes, considerable quantities of wine. Although there is not much information about those aboard who consumed the food on the *Mártires*, we do learn that at her sinking, a Jesuit priest, Father Francisco Rodriques, gave up his place on the ship's boat and remained aboard to give absolution and confession to those facing death. He did not survive.

The balance of the book (chapters 5-8 and the conclusion) focus on the site and particularly, the hull remains. A chapter on site formation carefully lays out the circumstances of the sinking and the recovery of artifacts by sport divers in the 1970s and 1980s. Castro uses this information to help us better understand the site. The artifacts recovered at São Julião da Barra are not analyzed in the book, but were the

subject of an MA thesis by Sara Brigadier at Texas A&M University in 2002. An artifact list is included in Appendix C.

During the major professional survey and excavation of the site in 1996-97 and 1999-2000, the wooden hull was recorded. Artifacts recovered include porcelain dishes, an iron gun, and three astrolabes. One astrolabe was inscribed with the date of 1605 (the year *Mártires* left Lisbon) and bore a maker's mark of the Goes family workshop in Lisbon. While this dated object helps identify the wreck, it does not do so absolutely. Castro compiles evidence in favor of identifying the site as the remains of the *Mártires*, but acknowledges that it is not conclusive.

Chapter 7 focuses on the hull and carefully examines the ship's timbers, mostly cut from cork oak trees, and the stone pine planking. About fifty square metres of wooden structure remained, including portions of the keel, apron, frames, planking and fasteners. The analysis and reconstruction of the vessel is carefully argued, employing the author's extensive knowledge of naval architecture and historical texts. This includes a lines drawing of an India nau based on no more than 10 per cent of the lower hull.

In his conclusion, Castro continues with his analysis of the hull remains to inch closer toward a positive identification of the ship as the *Nossa Senhora dos Mártires* and to the placement of the remains in a theoretical framework. Noting the suggestions of Eric Reith on "architectural signatures" and Ole Crumlin-Pedersen's "finger prints" on Scandinavian medieval ships, he turns to Thomas Oertling's proposed twelve traits that characterize western Atlantic post-medieval craft. Not enough of the hull of the *Nossa Senhora dos Mártires* survives to confirm its place in this tradition.

This is an admirable study of an important shipwreck. Doubtless its location near Lisbon brought attention to the site. It became a central issue in Portuguese legislation on treasure hunting, and though heavily looted, provided significant information about Portuguese trade to India in great ships built to carry the humble peppercorn.

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Colin White (ed.), *Nelson: The New Letters*, London; Boydell and Brewer Press, in association with the National Maritime Museum and the Royal Naval Museum, 2005, xxix + 509 pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index, US \$39.95, paper; ISBN 1-84383-130-9

In a brief literary survey of the Nelson decade by Eugene Rasor, one of this world's more indefatigable bibliographers, fifteen of 242 entries cite Colin White, Deputy Director of the Royal Naval Museum.<sup>(1)</sup> White's substantial contribution to the Trafalgar bicentenary includes the so-called Nelson Letters Project, which has turned up more than 1300 previously undiscovered or overlooked letters. Five hundred and seven of them appear in this volume. Because there is so much new material, and because it covers "almost every important stage in Nelson's career" the editor writes that "... in a sense, this book is almost Nelson's autobiography" (xv). "Almost" is the key word. One may see the events of Lord Nelson's life through his own eyes when reading his enormous and masterful epistolary output, and these selections have certainly enhanced our understanding of the man and his work, but they still do not constitute the whole man or the whole life. Even combined with the preceding and very large published collections, there are irreplaceable gaps. As White points out, Nelson burned all Emma Hamilton's letters to him, and it is only through Fanny's letters to Nelson's agent Alexander Davison - not included in this book - that we have found out previously unknown aspects of the marriage breakdown. As the most reputable of his countless biographers have demonstrated, Nelson was a brilliant apologist for his own interests, and he really has to be seen through other eyes than his own in order to assess his true worth.

Biographies now appearing do make use of the Nelson Letters Project - a triumph of team research - but their documentation goes well beyond Nelson's own output. That being